

5 A Day the Preschool Way

5 A Day and Field Trips and Gardening



5 A Day the Preschool Way

From the Farm to You!



Display the poster on the following page at children's eye level, then gather your group to talk about what they see. Children may notice that the poster features a game. Explain that everyone will have a chance to play the game. Now, as a group you may want to talk about what the poster shows about how some foods go from the farm to children's tables at home or school.

Discuss the image on the poster. Help children understand that the sequence of steps from farm to table for both apples and squash is similar and represents the process that other fruits and vegetables follow. For example, apples grow on trees in an orchard. They are picked and may be sold as fresh apples by the farmer or at a produce market. Some apples go to a factory where they are made into applesauce, juice, jelly, pies, and other apple products. These foods go to the supermarket, where families can buy them, along with fresh apples, to eat at home. Then explain the steps for squash, which grows on a vine. In a factory, squash is canned or frozen. Pumpkins, which are a kind of squash, are made into canned pie filling or pumpkin pies that are ready to eat.

Talk about different workers who are part of this process: farmers, pickers, factory workers, truck drivers who transport fresh produce or processed food to supermarkets, workers in grocery stores or at produce stands, and adults at home and school who prepare the foods.

Ask children to think of other fruits and vegetables that follow this same process from farm to table. Invite children to share their experiences with picking fresh fruits and vegetables or food shopping with family members, and their favorite ways to eat apples, squash, and other fruits and vegetables.

The poster can also be used to play counting games. Place the poster on a table or on the floor to play the From the Farm to You! game. Make two sets of number cards from 1 to 5 and provide a playing piece for each player. One child or team takes the apples, one the squash. Players take turns drawing a number card and moving that many spaces. The first to get the fruit or vegetable from the farm to the child wins.

For a different counting experience, use the sets of objects and numerals from 1 to 10 that border the poster. Children can count the objects, use their fingers to trace over the numerals, and practice one-to-one correspondence using manipulatives, such as putting 1 small block on the "1" pumpkin. Children can also use pictures or plastic models of fruits and vegetables to show you sets of numbers.¹

¹ From Celebrate Healthy Eating™ series



PUMPKIN



KIWI



CABBAGES



ACORN SQUASH



ORANGES



APPLES



CHERRY TOMATOES



BRUSSEL SPROUTS



GRAPES



CRANBERRIES

5 A Day the Preschool Way

Eat and Grow an Avocado



Materials Needed

- One or more avocados
- Lemon (for juice)
- Toothpicks
- Crackers
- Forks, plastic knives, plates
- Carrot curls
- Clear plastic cup
- Water

Prep Time

- 10 minutes

Set Up

- Wash the avocados and lemons.

Directions

- Select one (or more) ripe avocados.
- Peel the avocados and remove seeds.
- Cut lemons in half.
- Mash avocado and add lemon juice.
- Let children spread the mashed avocado on crackers.
- Top crackers with a carrot curl.
- Poke toothpicks into avocado seed around the middle.
- Suspend the seed so the rounded half is down in the water, and the pointed half is out of the water. The seed should not dry out - so add water as needed. Germination takes place in about in about 30 days. Plant the seed in a pot of dirt and watch it grow.

5 A Day the Preschool Way

We Can Grow a Salad!



The activities on the following page provide instruction on growing leaf lettuce and radishes which can then be used for a home grown salad. This is part of the Celebrate Healthy Eating series from Dannon Institute and is used with permission.



We Can Grow a Salad!

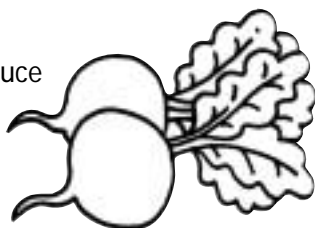


Tending a garden shows children firsthand that fruits and vegetables don't just come from the supermarket—they are plants that grow in or under the soil and on vines, bushes, and trees. Just as they are learning that they need fruits and vegetables to grow healthy bodies, children will be helped to understand what plants need to grow—sunshine, water, air, and soil rich with nutrients.

Getting Ready to Plant

Leaf lettuce and radishes both grow quickly and can be grown in containers indoors or out. In six to eight weeks, you'll have salad ingredients to sample. Involve children in all phases of planting and caring for the seeds. They might keep a gardening journal with pictures of how the plants change from seeds to foods that we eat.

Obtain fast-growing leaf lettuce and radish seeds, potting soil (available in hardware and gardening stores), and containers that are at least six inches wide. You can use a rectangular window box or, to literally give children a window into their garden, try a large fish tank. Wash the tank in very hot water so that it is sterile before you add the potting soil. The tank is best for short-term gardening projects and works especially well for growing tomatoes, peppers, or beans.



When the lettuce sprouts, normally in four to 10 days, thin seedlings so that the plants are four to six inches apart. Explain to children that you need to do this so that all the plants get enough water and nutrients from the soil.

- Start picking the lettuce as soon as you have enough leaves for a salad. Pick only the outer leaves so that the plant will continue producing.
- Explain that since radishes grow under the ground, you need to pull them up to see if they are ready to eat. Test the first plant in about a month. Radishes are ready when they are about one inch across.

Growing Leaf Lettuce and Radishes:

- Follow the specific planting and care instructions on the seed packets.
- When you see the first radish sprouts, usually in three to 10 days, pull out seedlings so that the remaining plants are one or two inches apart.

